

*Manmanābhava*¹

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In the *Bhagavadgītā*, whenever Lord Krishna uses the first person singular, he is referring to himself as Īśvara. In other words, Vyāsa presents Krishna as Bhagavān. Thus, the meaning of the compound *manmanābhava* would be *īśvara-manā bhava*, may you become one whose mind is with me, Īśvara. Either the mind objectifies Īśvara or dwells upon Īśvara.

Keeping the Mind in Bhagavān

There is a certain possibility of continuity of thought, *sajātiya-vṛtti-pravāha*. A *vṛtti*, a thought-form, does not have any staying power; it is always *kṣaṇika*, momentary. It has got to be so. *Vṛttis* are momentary, like the frames in a film. Because they are moving, you will see the same person, but with a difference, and thereby, you capture motion. The number of frames is adequate so that there is no jerk in the movement. So too, we have enough frames in our mind so that we can recognize continuous motion; otherwise, it would be seen in fits and starts. Being momentary, a thought is there, and it is gone. It does not stay. That is how the whole *jagat* is; *jāyate gacacti*, it comes into being and goes away. There is always a newness about it. A single object, which is recognized, is coming and going, but because it is the same object. You see a swami sitting, even though it is not constant. There is a flow of the same object, so you see the same thing, with small differences. *Sajātiya-pravāha* is a flow of the same type of thing, as in mental *pūjā*, worship, in which there are different steps. Every step has the stamp of *pūjā*, but the steps are different—*āsanam*, offering a seat; *pādyam*, water to wash the feet; *arghyam*, water to wash the hands; *snānam*, bath; *vastram*, clothes; *ābharaṇam*, ornaments; *candanam kumkumam*, sandal paste and vermillion powder. Each step is different, but the category, *jāti*, is the same, *pūjā-jāti*. You are not moving away from *pūjā*, but the mind has different occupations. Though it is not the same occupation, the particular name, *pūjā*, continues to be there in all the steps. That is the *jāti*. The specific item in the *pūjā* category, the step, is different. The main thing is *pūjā* and these are all auxiliaries for the *pūjā*. This is an ingenious way of keeping the mind in the same occupation. You give the mind enough scope to move around, but at the same time, the occupation is the same. This is possible in *pūjā*, etc., which is a pursuit which has me, Īśvara, as the topic.

In the *Gītā*, from the second chapter onwards, so much is covered about *ātmā*, the truth of everything. From the seventh chapter onwards, there is more Īśvara

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presented. The nature of Īśvara, essentially, and what makes Īśvara, Īśvara are elaborately discussed. At the end of it *Bhagavān* says, *manmanābhava*, may your mind be with me always. Does that mean you cannot do anything else? Because the mind has one occupation, it will have no accommodation for another occupation, since it can only entertain one thing at a time. If Īśvara is always there, then you cannot do anything else. This is what one who has no exposure to the teaching, thinks. Then he complains, "Swamiji, the mind does not stay with me. It goes to various unfinished jobs and gives up *Bhagavān*." By the same logic through which it went away, it comes back also. It is a loop. From anything, you can go and come back to the same thing, without thinking. What is the logic for going away? Nothing.

The mind keeps coming and going. If that is the truth, then there is nothing much to talk about. Krishna becomes another object, through some association, and is one more person in the world. He cannot say that he is all-pervasive², or "I am the one who is in the heart of everyone, I am the one who sustains the entire *jagat*, and I pervade the entire *jagat*. From me, is memory; your faculty to know; from me, is this power to suspend what you know, what you remember," BG 15.15.³ That all this can be suspended is a great blessing. The capacity to suspend makes your mind fresh so that it can see something new. Even old notions can get negated in the wake of knowledge. You can get rid of ignorance and ignorance-born wrong notions because the mind is capable of being open, having suspended all notions for the time being. That is the grace of Īśvara; it is given to you. He says, "From me, is your faculty to remember and recollect, to know and the power to suspend. I am the one to be known in all four Vedas and I am the one who revealed the Vedas. I am the revealer and I am the revealed," BG 15.15. Like this *Bhagavān* uses the first person singular in all these sentences.

Bhagavān is Not an Object

Bhagavān cannot be an object enclosed by a given thought. An apple is enclosed by a thought, excluding every other thought. This is how we learn to recognize objects discretely. A discrete object is the object of a thought form excluding everything else. When you thread a needle, everything else in the world is excluded. Even the needle is excluded. Only the eye of the needle is the object in focus. That alone exists. When you see a tree, and then see the trunk of the tree, the focus, the intended perception, *tātparya*, is the trunk, even though the tree is there. And if you see the leaf, then only the leaf is there, and so on. You can go on reducing the focus down to the molecules that make the chlorophyll.

² *mayātataśidamp sarvam jagadavyaktamūrtinā*, BG 9.4

³ *sarvasya cāham hrdisannivisto mattassmr̄tirjñānamapohanam ca*, BG 15.15.

In the same way, you can have a collective object-*vṛtti* called forest. There, the entire *tātparya* is different. This is how the mind works. When you think of one thing, other things are necessarily excluded.

When you think of Bhagavān everything else is excluded. The question is: Is there Bhagavān and everything else? What is other than Bhagavān? The Upanisads tell us that whatever you see here is Īśvara;⁴ what you know and do not know. Nothing is outside Īśvara including the given ignorance an individual may have. If the whole thing is Īśvara, then when can your mind be away from Īśvara? Practice this a little bit—instead of sending the mind to Īśvara, try to send it away from Īśvara. For this, you must necessarily have knowledge of what Īśvara is.

Another way of looking at this is, “Wherever my mind goes and lands, that is your lotus feet.”⁵ Whether it thinks of time, it is you; a place, it is you; an object, it is you. The sun, moon, constellations, mountains, oceans, continents, laws, forces are all you. Let the mind go; where will it go? Outside Bhagavān, how will it go? If the mind stays, if it is attracted towards something glorious, that is you. If someone is very strong, that strength is you.⁶ The burning power that fire has, that is you. Any glory anywhere, which attracts, is you. In fact the word ‘krishna’ means the one who attracts everything⁷. Whichever quality, feature, attribute attracts, that is Bhagavān. Lord Krishna says, “The brilliance in the brilliant person is me⁸. ” The faculty to think is given, and objects to think about are given. Ignorance is given and the capacity to dispel it is given, for which there must be truth. The whole thing is given. How can anyone say, “This is my brilliance”? The ‘my’ is gone. My brilliance or someone else’s brilliance is Īśvara’s brilliance. That is the law.

Understanding Bhagavān

To understand Bhagavān it takes a certain way of looking at what ‘is’. It is not your usual way of looking at something, as a product made by someone. You see the *jagat* and wonder by whom it was made. By Bhagavān. The eyes go up immediately. Unless this orientation goes, there is no Bhagavān. The question of where Bhagavān is should not even arise. “What ‘is’ Bhagavān?” alone should be the question. “What ‘is’?” will yield everything. You are not going to search elsewhere, because searching for something else presupposes understanding of

⁴ *idam sarvam īśvara-buddhayā āccādanīyam, yad idam sarvam īśvarah*, based on *Īśāvāsyā Upaniṣad* 1.1

⁵ *yatra yatra mano yāti tatra tatra tava pāda pañkajam*

⁶ *balaṁ balavatāṁ cāham*, BG 7.11

⁷ *ākarṣati sarvasmin sarvān*

⁸ *tejastejasvinām aham*, BG 7.10

what is in front of you. But what is in front is not understood, because that has the solution. It is the product, it is the cause, and it is everything. You do not search for Īśvara outside of what you see. That orientation does not work. Therefore, question “What is it that I see here?” In what you know, Īśvara reveals himself. You require only one object, because you are the subject, the enquirer. The object can be the universe or one system or the sun or the earth or a rock. The object should reveal the truth of the object.

If the object that you see is a table, what is its truth? ‘What is?’, is the question. You think it is created by a carpenter who is not here, because when you see the table, you do not see the carpenter. What did he make? A table. Can you see the table without seeing another object, the meaning of which is not the same as table? We have an object table, which means that we have a word ‘table’ and that word has an object. Then there is a word, ‘wood’. It also has an object, wood. When you see the table, do you see wood at the same time? There are two words, ‘table’, and ‘wood’. Both must be synonyms if they are referring to the same object. ‘Table’ refers to an object and ‘wood’ refers to the same object, therefore, wood and table are synonyms. What does it mean if two words are synonyms? It means that wherever there is a table there is wood, and wherever there is wood, there is a table. Both are wrong. Wherever I see a table, I do not see wood, and wherever I see wood, I do not see a table. Here, wood and table have assembled together. A certain logician⁹ said, “They are two different objects connected by a principle called *samavāya*.” He says so because he has a commitment to proving that they are two different objects. Let us understand ‘what is’ and not try to prove anything. ‘What is’, is this table, which I cannot even imagine without imagining a substance other than table, referred to by the word ‘wood’, ‘plastic’ ‘steel’, etc. Some other object has to be seen by me in order to see the table. Without seeing that, I cannot see the table. Not only can I not see table, I cannot even imagine it. Any one thing you look into is like this.

You cannot think of a given thing without thinking of another. That ‘another’ also, you cannot think of without thinking of another. The more you know, the more you have ‘another’. Can you think of an object without its cause? No. If there is a cause for this entire *jagat*—the maker and material being one cause—can you think of the *jagat* without it? Can you take the mind away from any one object to Īśvara? How can you think of an object outside Īśvara? You can think of Īśvara perhaps without the *jagat*, but can you think of a *jagat* which is outside Īśvara? Which object will take you away from Īśvara? No object. When you understand ‘what is’, with the answer to that question, “What is?” you have all the answers. All questions become redundant. In all the chapters of the Gītā, Bhagavān has made such questions redundant. Therefore, *manmanābhava*—we

⁹ This is the Vaiśeṣika who considers *samavāya* as one of the seven categories of substance in the *jagat*.

have to see that whatever we see is Īśvara, because the product is *nāmarūpa*, just name-form, which is not separate from Īśvara; it is Īśvara. You do not need to rub your eyes and see something more. Inside one has to be totally free from not recognizing 'what is'. If you see only the table and fail to recognize the wood, you will search for wood.

The World is Only Words

We have only words and their meanings. We think there are tangible objects for which there are words, but there are just words and their meanings. The word 'shirt', for instance, has its meaning. Whether it is in English or any language, it is the same. The word 'shirt' is a word because it has a meaning which we both understand, and therefore, I can communicate that to you, and we can deal with it; that is *vyavahāra*. This is a shirt and it can be used only as a shirt, not as pants. 'Pant' is a different word and has a different use. For every word we have a meaning, and when we see the meaning, we use the word. We see the meaning in the mind, and also, outside, which we call an object. We have the word and the meaning in our head, and when we see something outside that corresponds to the meaning of that word, we recognize it as an object, like a shirt.

Sometimes, the word and its meaning are only in my head. I imagine it, but cannot see it with my eyes. I imagine a song, but I do not hear it through my ears. I can imagine a particular fragrance, but I do not find a source outside from which I can pick up the fragrance. Then we say this is imagination, subjective. When you are able to see the shirt with your eyes, it is not an imagined shirt. It is not "I think, therefore it is," but rather, "It is, therefore, I am able to recognize it," the word and its meaning. You get a concept of reality out of this. What is imagined is subjective, not available for public perception, but seen only in your mind. It is purely a subjective perception. We do not say that it is not valid, but when we are talking of realities, we are talking about what is objectively real. What we make out of it is subjective. Sometimes you fantasize, visualize and then produce. That has its own use, but it is all subjective.

Because we see objects outside, we think that each one is different from everything else, which is true. Having accepted that, we consider that these objects are the meanings of words, which we necessarily perceive. We accept that kind of objectivity, but that does not give the shirt any status of tangibility. This is because shirt has no being. The 'isness', the being, of the shirt belongs to the fabric. The fabric 'is'; the 'is', resolves into the fabric. I see the existence of a shirt, but I touch the fabric, not the shirt. When I say it is a cotton shirt, I transcend the fabric, the yarn, and then go to the cause, the cotton. The capacity

to transcend and see without doing anything is Vedanta. A shirt continues to be a shirt; fabric continues to be fabric; yarn continues to be yarn; but I transcend all of them and say that it is cotton. If you are quantum physicist, you will go further—up to quantum objects, particles. A shirt is nothing but particles. All the way the shirt is an effect.

The material cause is where the effect is. The material cause for the shirt is fabric, and is referred to by another word. The shirt is referred to by the word 'shirt' with its own meaning, but what is referred to by the word 'shirt' is not separate from what is referred to by the word 'fabric', the cause of the shirt. This is the method, *prakriyā*, of revealing the truth through cause-effect. The effect is the cause, and therefore, there is no cause-effect, so we call it a *prakriyā*. The shirt is produced and is a value addition. Fabric is the cause, but is also an effect from the standpoint of its cause, yarn. Where the shirt is, the fabric is; where the fabric is, the yarn is. Both causes are there, so I can even say that the shirt is but yarn; and further, yarn is but cotton; cotton is but fibers with their own molecular structure, and the molecule is atoms, so the shirt is atoms. I am wearing a bunch of particles. The body is a bunch of particles. One bunch of particles is wearing another bunch of particles. The glory is that particles can wear particles. Therefore, in non-difference there is no joy; the joy is in difference because difference does not make a difference. If it makes a difference then it is a problem. Let the differences be. Is there any cause, more fundamental, even for the particles? If there is a cause, then the particle is the cause, and therefore, the shirt is that cause.

You are asking, "Where is god?" The shirt is the effect; the effect is the cause. If there is a fundamental cause, it is in the form of effect, which, in terms of its reality, is called *mithyā*. You can neither dismiss the shirt as non-existent, nor say it exists by itself. If I use the word 'reality' for what is self-existent, then I cannot use the word 'reality' for the shirt; I cannot use the word 'non-existent', for the shirt because I wear the shirt. The very object that you confront is non-separate from its cause. And one more thing—things are intelligently put together.

The Cause; All Knowledge

We, with our knowledge based upon our experiences, know that we cannot create a thing without really understanding, visualizing, what it is, and for what purpose it is going to be created. The extent of knowledge required to create a given thing is the extent of knowledge the author must have to create that thing. In creating an object, like a shirt, the tailor knows why he is buying the fabric, why he cuts it the way he does, why he stitches it in this way. And the shirt is created. Because there is adequate knowledge, after the creation process, the

meaning of the word 'shirt', is there. Previously, it was in his head; it was subjective. Now it has become objective. This 'objective' is amazing. Even the word 'objective', has its limitations. Really, there is no object, but when you look at it, you can recognize it as a shirt. When it is in your head, I cannot look at it, but after creation it is available for public perception. This is what we say *sṛṣṭi*. Here it is knowledge that there is such a possibility that accounts for the creation of a shirt. Whatever name you give an object, it is there because it is a possibility in this world.

If a shirt presupposes shirt-knowledge, then the body also presupposes body-knowledge. When the body is born, it presupposes knowledge of it and the programming required for it to grow. The knowledge that the existence of this body pre-supposes must be somewhere. The father does not have this knowledge, nor does the mother. Where is that knowledgeable person? Never ask, "Where?", because there are people who will say that it is not locally available. What is non-local? This whole *jagat* is in the form of knowledge, word and its meaning. Possibilities are all words and meanings. *Buddhi*, intellect, is a word and its meaning; *manah*, mind, a word and its meaning; *cittam*, memory, a word and its meaning. That is knowledge. 'Body' is one word, and when you look into that, there are words, words, words, and their meanings, *nāmni nāmāni*. The meanings of many words are the meaning of one single word, 'body', and not only this body, but the bodies of all living beings. Limitless knowledge, resting in a conscious being, is the cause, is the effect. The question of "Where?" does not arise here, because the effect is the cause. We swallow the material cause and the efficient cause. The effect is the meaning of the word 'knowledge', and the cause is all-knowledge, Īśvara.

Anything you focus your attention upon is all-knowledge Īśvara. Within that all-knowledge alone is this individual knowledge. This is 'what is'. Where is the necessity of questioning 'where' and 'how'? This is how it is. "Swamiji, I understand all this but why did god create this?" God did not create all this; this is god. This is how god is—the maker and material; male and female; god and goddess. If somebody is sitting somewhere and creating, then you can ask, "Why did he create this?" This is how Īśvara is, and it necessarily includes you.

That Īśvara who is inside and outside, who is all-knowledge, one consciousness, you are. You are that conscious being. All that is here is one knowledge, and within that, from the standpoint of your mind, which has limited knowledge, etc., this all-knowledge is the being. Small-knowledge is also the same being. Small-knowledge is not outside consciousness; all-knowledge is not outside consciousness. Therefore, all-knowledge, being, consciousness is Īśvara, and small-knowledge, being, consciousness is *jīva*, the individual. Are you away from Īśvara? Can you think of an object outside Īśvara? The greatness of a

human being is that even then he can think that he is away. Therefore, Bhagavān says, *manmanābhava*, may your mind always be in me.

Missing and Non Missing the Presence of Īśvara

When you are bringing Īśvara into your day-to-day life, there are areas where you are bound to miss the presence of Īśvara in your awareness and understanding. First, it is in your understanding. Even if someone has understood, there are certain areas where one is bound to miss the presence of Īśvara. The awareness is never out of sight, but can be missed. Even if a person is within sight, there can be remoteness if he is not recognized. Then, in one's awareness, there is alienation. Īśvara also seems to be far removed from me. That 'me' is very loud. In the noise of the *jīva*, who is so loud, Īśvara is not heard even if he says, "I am here." We are going to look into those areas where the presence of Īśvara is likely to be missed. In those areas, this sentence—*manmanābhava*—will become very valid. Given the understanding of the ninth chapter, which we have covered so far, all that is here is Īśvara. Then at the end of this chapter, Bhagavān says, *manmanābhava*, may your mind be always in me; *madbhaktobhava*, may you be devoted to me; *madyājibhava*, may you worship me; *mām namaskuru*, may you surrender to me, *mat parāyaṇo bhava*, may I be the most important to you; *māmeva yesyasi*, you will not be separate from me.

'What is', is Īśvara—before the manifestation of this *jagat*, including my body-mind-sense complex, and after the manifestation, because only what is unmanifest can manifest. If what is manifest is Īśvara then the un-manifest is also Īśvara. The unmanifest Īśvara is the cause, and the manifest Īśvara is the manifested Īśvara, so the effect is not separate from the cause. All-knowledge Īśvara being the cause means that the *jagat* was un-manifest in the form of pure knowledge. In the beginning, there was the word, and the word was with god, and the word was god. This is our understanding; word is *nāma*. We see this in *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*. All this was unmanifest; then it became manifest as name and form.¹⁰ That is how Īśvara manifests. What was undifferentiated is now manifest in a differentiated form, like a plant in a seed.

In an orange seed, you do not see the orange tree. When you break the seed open, there is no indication of an orange tree there—no presence of a trunk, branches, leaves, fruit, etc. It is all undifferentiated, in other words, an unmanifest, tree. The manifest orange tree was, *āśit*. The manifest tree was in the seed at the causal level as unmanifest. If you look at anything at the causal level, it is unmanifest; it is pure software. What is unmanifest, undifferentiated,

¹⁰ *taddhedam tarhyavvyākrtamāśit tanāmarūpābhyaṁeva vyākriyata*, BrU 1.4.7.

becomes differentiated in time. This is called *sṛṣṭi*, creation. Look at the creation now. It is not that someone created it. The entire *jagat* was there, undifferentiated and that is Īśvara. Differentiated Īśvara, is also Īśvara. What was, what is and what will be is Īśvara.

In this manifestation, the individual is also a very significant component. When we talk of *Dakṣināmūrti* as the Lord, the Lord is incomplete without the individual who is looking at the Lord. The Lord is one, but just for our understanding he is presented with eight components. It is an eight-fold model. The five elements, *sūkṣma*, subtle and *sthūla*, gross: *ākāśah* (time is assumed with space), *vāyu*, air; *agni*, fire; *āpah*, water and *prthivī*, earth, plus the sun representing all luminous bodies, the moon for all planets, and the eighth factor in this eight-fold form, *aṣṭamūrti*, is the significant person, you, who is looking at the Lord. You have to include yourself for the Lord to be the Lord.

You are the significant person because everything else is unlike you. If you examine the meaning of the word 'T', it does not take much time for you to understand that you have no comparison, so how can you have a complex? Comparison leading to a complex is only between things that are similar. You cannot sit by a rock and say, "You are impervious to sun, rain, people. I am jealous of you." A classical musician who spent all his time learning music, found that when he performed, people generally slept. If he compares himself with a rock-star who attracts large crowds, he can have a complex. He can have jealousy, anger and frustration, but not while sitting by a rock. Everything is unlike you. You are the only significant person in this world. You are the only subject; everything else is an object. All that is here is objects of your consciousness—the whole *jagat*. That is why consciousness is unlike anything else. And this is why god cannot be an object of consciousness. God has got to be that consciousness, and everything. What 'is', is Īśvara. In this, there is the total and the individual; that is the manifestation. If you look at yourself through your body-mind-sense complex, which gives you individuality, that is the truth about you. In the total, Īśvara, there is the individual, another individual and so on. This is called *nānā*, differentiated creation, and it is all intelligently put together.

Among the various laws, there are certain genetic laws and karmic laws. They work in tandem because it is all one phenomenon. You look at it through a particular model and say that it is a genetic flow. If you ask "Why?" then there is a karmic connection also, according to *śāstra*. You do not separate the laws from their outcome, because if the outcome is not there, you cannot even discern the law. You discover the law because there is an outcome of it. Otherwise, how are you going to understand the law? Each individual is different. *Karma* is a part of that. When you look into it, it becomes a very important law. You can

never discern the law without the outcome. Even if the *śāstra* tells you something, you cannot assimilate it unless the outcome is experienced by you.

We see ourselves missing the bus and getting the bus. These outcomes we see. *Śāstra* tells us that there is a law of *karma*. We accept that and can assimilate it, because in the outcome, we see the law. Whether you study the physical order, the biological order, or psychology, etc., they are all orders. In physics, if you find in the dual behavior of a particle, that it is a wave now, that is the order, as far you know now. There is no contradiction because you are trying to understand 'what is'. What 'is', is Īśvara. Therefore, the study of all the orders is *bhagavat-darśanam*, the vision of god. That is why when you discover or understand something there is such a joy. The quality of it is not comparable with any other pleasure, because you are having a clearance of your ignorance, which separated you from all-knowledge Īśvara. With reference to a particular fact, there is ignorance or no ignorance. When there is no ignorance, there is joy. You are in harmony with Īśvara. Even a joke you understand when there is clearance. That is knowledge. Any understanding puts you in harmony with Īśvara.

What 'is', is Īśvara. Alienation is ignorance. Subject-object are both Īśvara. Let us take an object like music—rock, classical or any other music. Then there is a person, you, significant you. Music is the object; you are the subject. You sit there judging the music, then you give yourself to the music. Then there is no subject-object, just fusion. The subject-object are not standing opposed to each other, and because there is fusion, there is joy. Subject-object is Īśvara, nonduality. All within the non-dual whole, the wholeness is experienced, whether it is the joy of knowing, *vidyānanda*, or the joy of fusion with an object, *viśayānanda*, or some clearance and joy from *prāṇāyāma* or meditation, *yogānanda*, there is only one *ānanda*, *īśvarānanda*.

Here is where your growth lies. How much you allow Īśvara to be in your life, how much you are in harmony with Īśvara, is your growth as a person. Being in harmony with Īśvara is not being in harmony with one single person, because everything is Īśvara. It is not a single person that you have settle account with. You have to settle account with the whole world, and only then will you settle account with Īśvara. How do you settle account with the whole world?

The world is not that simple. When I admire the rose, holding it in my hand, the thorn pricks me. This is how it is. Some will say that the thorn is evil. No, the thorn is part of creation; it is there so that a goat will not eat the rose. The plant wants to keep it for some time, until it withers away. It is part of its survival mechanism, its intelligence. There is no evil. The word 'evil', the way of looking at something as evil, is the only evil in the world. This is because of some inner

problem. One has to create that evil so that one can deal with it. There is no evil; there are only causes and effects. Using words like, ‘evil’, ‘beggar’, etc., only shows a person’s insecurity, how vulnerable he is. One has to come out of this survival pattern of living. These are all words that give one some kind of shell behind which one seeks some security. This is not security, because you are out in the world; you have to breathe fresh air.

There is an order in psychology. The moment you say that something is evil, there is no order. If someone is born evil, who is to blame? It is all in order. Once you understand that there is order, you can relax, because in the appreciation of order there is the presence of Īśvara in your mind. You can understand that Īśvara’s presence is purely cognitive, because the presence is there already. Absence is only due to your disowning or not seeing. Therefore, it is cognitive. The moment you say that any particular emotion is in order, you are recognizing the presence of Īśvara. That is what Bhagavān says in *manmanābhava*, let your mind recognize the presence of me in any situation. The emotional order is a very critical order because all our problems are emotional. People who do not deal with emotions and want to transcend them should understand that they have a lot of emotions to process. They are afraid to touch the Pandora’s box. If you understand the order, then you are not afraid of anything. This is an order that is more critical, more important, because it is connected to the order of *dharma*.

Dharma

I have no word to translate into English the word ‘*dharma*’. *Dharma* has a vast manifestation. It is present every moment in your life. *Dharma* is Īśvara’s manifestation. Interaction with the world is governed by *dharma* every moment of your life. The presence of *dharma* is there. If you transgress, there is *adharma* and if you conform, *dharma* is there. If you conform to *dharma*, it is very much there and you are not separate from it. *Dharma* is Īśvara, and therefore, you are in harmony with Īśvara. If you are transgressing, it is because you are already alienated. There is guilt and hurt, which is alienation. The joy of living is gone.

Therefore, *manmanābhava*, may you be that person whose mind is with Īśvara. That is the literal meaning. *Manmanābhava* implies that the presence of Īśvara is already there, and has to be recognized. The recognition should be such that presence cannot not be lost sight of. Suppose, physically you want to go away from space, where will you go? Space is non-separate from Īśvara. At least from this place you can go to another place, even another order of reality, as you do in a dream. Leaving this place-time, you create your own place-time in which the time series is different. It does not have the relativity that you have here

based upon the speed of light. There, you create another time series and place; that is possible and is within the order of Īśvara. Why should there be this particular dream? It is all within the order. The dream is controlled by the order of Īśvara just as the physical universe is. The presence of Īśvara cannot be missed by anyone who is awake to Īśvara.

A certain critical area of Īśvara's manifestation, where one is likely to miss Īśvara, is the area where there is conflict between desire-produced pressure and *dharma*. *Dharma* is universal, and anything universal cannot be created by a human being. So knowledge of *dharma* is there in every person. Consider one value, like hurting. I do not want to get hurt; no one should hurt me. Who doesn't want this? 'Who' includes all life forms. A cow does not want to get killed. It wants to survive. That is innate in creation. It is the order of Īśvara. Every living being is given this instinct for survival, and survival implies not getting hurt. This is universal. But the cow does not seem to have the knowledge that you do not want to get hurt. It does not look at it as a value. If it did, then it would have regret after hurting somebody. It has no guilt because it knows that it should not get hurt, but does not seem to know that others do not want to get hurt either. That is why the cow is called *dharma-adharmābhyaṁ vimuktah*, free from *dharma* and *adharma*. *Paśupati* is called *vimukteśvara*, the lord of the *vimuktas*, where *vimukta* means an animal, *paśu*.

I do not want to get hurt; no one wants to get hurt; this knowledge is complete. That is why non-injury is the highest dharma, *ahimsāparamo dharmah*. Īśvara is manifest in the form of *dharma*. *Dharma* is not 'outside', but is manifest where it has got to be, right in your mind. That is the basic knowledge of yourself. You are a cognitive person, basically, not an agent. First, you are a knower; open your eyes, and you become a seer. No will is involved and no decision is involved. Just by opening your eyes, you become a seer. If there is a sound, you are a hearer, if your ears are open. You are a knowing person, a cognitive person, and in that person this knowledge of the universal value structure is given. This knowledge is there by common sense.

For human interaction you require a mechanism that will allow you to say, "No" when you have to. All the impulses are there, the desires are too numerous, and the pressures created by them are too great, because every human being is insecure until the person understands that he is the source of all security. There is a long way to go to know that, and until then, he is insecure and incomplete. His desires have got to be fulfilled in order for him to feel that he is 'somebody'. These kinds of desires produce a tremendous amount of pressure called *vega*—the pressure of desire, the pressure of anger. Anger is not the problem; it is the pressure, the force that is created by desire that is the motivating power. It moves mountains. It can be positive or it can go against *dharma*, which is innate

to the cognitive person. This is what we weakly refer to as conscience. It is really knowledge of *dharma*, which can become highly assimilated knowledge.

There is always pressure to cut corners when one does not have an assimilated value, so the advantage of conforming to *dharma* has to be assimilated. What do I lose when I go against *dharma*? That assimilation has to take place. What I gain is very clear—money, power, and advantage. “The one who is able to neutralize this pressure is successful¹¹. ” The pressure is a motivating force, but it turns into a harmful thing, for others and yourself, when it drives you to go against *dharma*, against Īśvara, and against yourself. Dharma is sensed by all of us, without exception. It is universal. You have knowledge of *dharma* in your mind, where you require a mechanism to regulate your actions, because you have freedom. The pressure created by desire is so great that you can abuse and destroy, so the brake mechanism has to be within yourself. That is the knowledge. Because you are a cognitive person, you have freedom to do, not to do, or do something differently. Therefore, you can say ‘yes’, or ‘no’. This capacity and freedom being there, the mechanism has to be there. That is how we are all able to live; that is how you can leave your house and come here. *Dharma* does not always transpire because of law and order. We control ourselves because we have a mechanism for that.

Dharma is not only a mechanism given to you to stop you from doing what you feel like doing when it is harmful to yourself and others, but also, to make you reach out and grow into a compassionate person. That *dharma* is given to you to help you grow into a huge human being. It is all-knowledge and it has an object which is not outside of you. The object of each value is inside you, and is not anything other than Īśvara, even though there is really no object at all. *Ahimsa* is not an object; compassion is not an object; love is not an object; giving is not an object. They are all the nature of Īśvara. *Dharma* is a critical manifestation of Īśvara, manifest in the mind of every human being, innate to the basic person who has this knowledge of dharma, Īśvara’s manifestation. It is in every human being, providing a basis on which to make his or her choices. The alienation from Īśvara is going against *dharma*. When you go against *dharma*, you are there very much; you have fallen victim to your own pressure. What was given is a privilege—to desire, to do, not to do. When one succumbs to the pressure caused by desire and it turns into passion, it makes the person go against Īśvara, against oneself. What kind of joy can one have when one goes against oneself? *Vaidika-dharma* holds *dharma* as a *puruṣārtha*, an end to be accomplished by a human being. *Dharma* is a manifestation of Īśvara, not a mandate of god. The difference is the difference between the aggressive and the objective.

¹¹ *śaknotīhaiva yaḥ soḍhuṇ prāk śarīrvimokṣaṇāt
kāmakrodhodbhavam vegam sa yukta sa sukhi narah*, BG 5.23

The world of objects has two categories—*rāga-dveṣa*, objects you love to have and retain and objects you love to avoid and get rid of. You have the privilege to desire, and therefore, you have *rāga-dveṣa*. There is no harm in them; they make you a privileged human being. That you can have desires is a privilege but one should not come under their spell, *tayoḥ vaśam na āgacce*, BG. A spell is the motive force you come under only when you go against *dharma*. Until assimilation of dharma takes place what is the deterrent? Norms in the society, punitive, discouraging laws are all deterrents. You have to be a mature person to assimilate dharma, and that comes only with one's own initiative. That is why dharma is a *puruṣārtha*. You cannot achieve it as a rule, like physical maturity. *Śāstra* recognizes that a human being has to grow to conform to *dharma* naturally, spontaneously. The growth is up to that point where you do not have any conflict, because what you like is exactly what is to be done, and what you do not like is what is not to be done. Then *dharma*, the *puruṣārtha* is yours. You are a successful person. That is *vaidika-dharma*. See the difference. Only then will you have the capacity to make proper choices and to make use of the privilege that you have. *Dharma* is Īśvara, and when you conform to *dharma* you become *manmanā*, one whose mind is in Īśvara. And for that you should have *madbhaktah*, devotion to Īśvara.

At the end of all the discussion in the 9th chapter of the Gita, Bhagavān says, *manmanābhava*, may you become one whose mind does not lose the presence of Īśvara. In the awareness of such a person, the presence of Īśvara is not lost sight of. But unless you understand Īśvara properly, that is not possible. Suppose you understand that wherever you go, all that is there is Īśvara, where will the mind go? That is what the whole teaching is. That is the difference between an object and Īśvara. A given object or a person is not any other object or person. You should not reduce Īśvara to one of those objects. Such ignorance cannot be further heightened. Therefore, there is so much discussion by Lord Krishna to make himself very clear about Īśvara, “May the presence of me (Īśvara) be always in your awareness,” because it is possible, because that is the truth.

Dharma is a manifestation of Īśvara in your mind, not outside of you. It manifests in the form of your interactions with the world born of your knowledge of *dharma*. Because it is a manifestation of Īśvara, we have the expression, *rāmāḥ vigrahavān dharmāḥ*, the Lord as *dharma* is manifest with a body, called Rama. *Dharma* itself assumes a body in the form of Rama. *Rāma* means the one in whom people discover joy.¹² Krishna is *ānanda-avatāra*, so his expressions are in the form of dance, music, etc. When *dharma* is there, *ānanda*

¹² *ramante yasmin iti rāmāḥ*

will follow, and without *dharma*, there cannot be *ānanda*. There can be *artha* and *kāma*, objects of pleasure, avenues of pleasure, for which there is enough wealth and so on, but only with *dharma* do they yield *ānanda*. That is why Rama is first, and then Krishna.

Bhagavān is there in the form of *dharma*, but not only that. *Bhagavān* says, "I am in the form of your desire, as long as it is not opposed to dharma.¹³" Even if your desire is against *dharma*, in your mind *Bhagavān* is there in the form of *dharma*. In terms of desire, he is there in the desire of all living beings, which is unopposed to *dharma*. In an animal, the desire is unopposed to *dharma* because it is programmed. A human being, however, has knowledge of *dharma*, and therefore, he alone is talked about here. "In human beings, I am in the form of *dharma* and desire that does not go against *dharma*." Even if a desire is against *dharma*, like wanting to rob someone, if you do not act on the thought, then you do not go against *Īśvara*. Because you had no control over that thought, even the occurrence of that desire is according to an order and that order is *Īśvara*.

There is an order because of which there is greed, coveting and so on. That kind of thinking is because of pressure that arise due to the psychological order. Psychology works along with the order of *dharma*. Anyone one who goes against *dharma* is not intrinsically healed. There is a background which is controlled by the psychological order, which is a manifestation of *Īśvara*. We understand *Īśvara* only in this way. Like the physical order is a manifestation of *Īśvara*, the biological order is another manifestation, the physiological order is another manifestation of *Īśvara*, and the psychological order is another critical manifestation of *Īśvara*, because it is intimately connected to dharma.

The order of *dharma* is one side of the coin, and the other side is the order of *karma*. Therefore, even a desire, which is not in keeping with *dharma*, can be accommodated within *Īśvara*'s order as long you do not go along with it. When one goes along with that desire, it becomes *karma*—*adharma* becomes *karma*. Only then is it *adharma*, otherwise it is all within *dharma*. It is against *dharma* only in action. Therefore, the Gita says, "You have a choice only over your action.¹⁴" One can argue, "Why don't we say that this wrong action is also *Īśvara*'s order?" Yes, that is also *Īśvara*, but it turns into guilt and fear, which is, again, all within the order. Therefore, there is *pāpa*, suffering, unpleasant experiences in this life, and the hereafter also. This is not an intelligent, pragmatic proposition. If you think you are gaining by robbing, then the loss is bigger than the gain; it is yourself. Everything that you want is to please

¹³ *dharma-aviruddho bhūteṣu kāmo'smi* BG 7.11

¹⁴ *karmani eva adhikāras te* BG 2.47

yourself; that is the basic want.¹⁵ You need to see yourself as a pleased person. How can you be pleased with guilt and fear inside? The very action has guilt involved in it. Therefore, a fancy is not taken into account. In keeping with the order, there are so many fancies occurring in your head. When you go along with one, make sure that the means of fulfilling it is in keeping with *dharma*. Therefore, *karma* becomes so important. *Dharma* is the basis and *karma* is what you choose. So you have a choice over your action; you can do it or you need not do it. That is the human choice. If that is lost, then the human status is lost. Therefore, you should be able to say, “No.” Up to this point, it is simple. Then you take it to another step.

When you are in harmony with *dharma* in your actions, then, whatever be the situation, there is *dharma* involved. *Dharma* is not merely right and wrong. It has other shades covering your life. *Dharma* is a dynamic order because life is dynamic. Situations keep on changing, but one thing never changes. In all situations, your response is appropriate or inappropriate. That is also an invariable. The appropriateness, called *svadharma*, is invariable. That this is appropriate at this place, at this time is all hooked on to *dharma*. Conformity is consideration of others. It is a high degree of sensitivity. You conform to certain conventions, which are all man-made conventions, but then, because you are doing what is appropriate, it will not cause any resistance from anyone. Therefore, you live a life of least disturbance. That is our understanding of *ahimsa*. At the time of *sannyāsa*, *ahimsa* alone is the commitment. It is a life of least disturbance to others and one's self, which is *svakarma*.

A situation calls for a certain thing to be done, and when you do it, you feel free because you have done your *svakarma*. If you do not do the laundry in time, nothing will happen, but the load of laundry will sit inside your head. I say this because when you finally do it, you feel lighter. It is clear that the load was unloaded. *Bhagavān* says, “The human being gains success in life by doing what is to be done.”¹⁶ BG ‘To be done’ also implies appropriateness and etiquette. If you have any doubt as to whether something is *dharma* or *adharma*, then ask and follow what the elders say or do. Conformity to *dharma* implies that what you do is not in any way harmful or disturbing. It includes the environment, flora and fauna also. Seeking help in knowing *dharma* is intelligent living. To be ignorant is not a special privilege of someone. Everyone is ignorant, until the person knows. *Svakarma*, whatever is to be done, whatever is appropriate, in all situations, is *Bhagavān*. If you recognize the presence of Īśvara by doing the appropriate thing, then you are *manmanā*.

¹⁵ ātmanastu kāmāya sarvaiṣ priyaiṣ bhavati BrU 2.4.5; 4.5.6

¹⁶ svakarmanā tam abhyarcya siddhit̄ vindati mānavah BG 18.46

*manmanā bhava madbhakto madyājī bhava mām namaskuru
māmevaiśyasi yuktvaivamātmānam matparāyanāḥ* BG 9.34

To be that person whose mind is awake to the presence of Īśvara in all situations, you do your *svakarma* with an awareness of, and conformity to, the order of dharma. Then you are in harmony with Īśvara. Whether you know Īśvara or not, when you do what is to be done, you feel at home. That is because you are in harmony with Īśvara, 'what is'. At all times the 'to be done', is given. You have no choice. When you do that without conflict, there is harmony. The awareness is important; *dharma* implies all this. It is not only a universal value structure; it is also duty. Even giving is *dharma*, because it is also something to be done. In a given situation, when you are in a position to give, you give. The *Sāmaveda* tells us *dānena adānam tara*, overcome the incapacity to give by giving. Being this kind of a person is not something you can decide about and be. It is a matter of understanding and living.

The Devotee

manmanā bhava madbhaktah

Being *manmanā* is not possible if you are a devotee, *bhakta*, of something else. If you look at the devotees in the world, they have a certain understanding of Īśvara in different degrees. They have some kind of *śraddha*, belief in Īśvara, and want Īśvara to help, but what they want is most important. If someone wants redress from his difficulties, relief from distress, he is a distressed devotee, an *ārta-bhakta*. If everything goes well, then Īśvara does not come into the picture, because this person thinks he is in charge. When things do not go well, then he invokes the grace of Īśvara, which is the right thing to do. That *bhakta* is a devotee in distress. The second kind is a devotee in distress too, but he is also an *arthārthi*, a devotee invoking grace for the success of an undertaking. He is more aware of the need of some grace. He understands that *īśvara-anugraha* is necessary for achieving his ends, *artha*. Besides the course of action that one employs for achieving a given end, one works for grace, because in between there are too many problems. That is religious pragmatism.

There is a third type of *bhakta*. He will pray when in distress, seek help, do what is to be done and invoke grace when he wants to accomplish an end. But primarily he is a *jijñāsu*, one who wants to know. The Lord says, "He is the one who wants to know me. Knowledge of me becomes his primary end." Everything else subserves that end, and that end is there all through his life. It is not that it is there at a given time and not there at other times. It is always there. If one is a *bhakta*, a *jijñāsu*, it means that all through he or she is that. No matter what kind of altar one prays to, a *bhakta* is always a *bhakta*. He is the primary person, because primarily he is related to Īśvara.

A wave in the ocean may be related to another wave because it was born of that wave. It also has a relationship to other waves as a sister, brother, friend, etc. But there is one relationship, which is not variable. In other relationships, when one is there, the others are absent—when the sister is there, the daughter has to be gone. In the invariable relationship, the *bhakta* wave is related to ocean. When the *bhakta* relates to her mother, does the *bhakta* go away, and the daughter come? No. Let us look at the mother and the ocean—the relationship is that of the individual and total. If there is a mother's mother, that mother also is individual and total; mother's daughter, individual and total. Mother's daughter related to mother's mother is not the same. She is granddaughter, but still, individual and total. Small, big, old, young are all individual and total. In other words when this relationship is recognized, the individual becomes a permanent *bhakta*. We have to create a word for this person, the one who recognizes the presence of the total pervading him or her. The ocean pervades the wave. Therefore, as an individual she is always related to the total. She can never be away from the total presence. As an individual, she is pervaded and sustained by the total. If she understands the role she has, the nature of Īśvara, the order that is Īśvara, then she is pervaded, sustained, blessed, he can say, by the presence of Īśvara, the total. This relationship is absolute because it is not variable.

A person who is basically a *bhakta* does not need to promote *bhakti*. That is the truth, but it takes *jñānam*, knowledge, to appreciate that, and that is why Bhagavān says he is a *jijñāsu* and not the more general *bhakta*. He is a *bhakta* who is not subject to spasms of *bhakti*. This *bhakta* is the basic person, the one who recognizes the relationship that is basic, that of the individual to the total. It is invariable, and remains there always, so that he has no doubt about what role he plays. A *jijñāsu-bhakta* is not a seasonal *bhakta*. A *jijñāsu* wants Bhagavān because he is available for owning, just for the asking. All that is here is Bhagavān so gaining of Bhagavān, is knowing. *Bhagavat-darśanam* is knowing. Seeing a particular form is *mānasika-ikṣaṇam* and is purely subjective. Even if Bhagavān gives such a *darśana* as his *karmaphala*, it is still *mānasika-ikṣaṇa*. Because the presence of Īśvara is always there, the gain of Īśvara is knowing Īśvara.

Such a person is unaffected by the roles. That is the *bhakta*. His *bhakti* is the cushion, so the roles' problems are confined to the roles. This is not ordinary. For that, you have to be a *bhakta*. That is the truth. Do not say you are consciousness. It does not work. That is dissociation. Because you are an individual, you have to resolve the issue with the presence of Īśvara. Between the *bhakta* who is aware of the presence of Īśvara and the role, there is always a self-aware distance, that is, a distance brought about by self-awareness. This distance is purely self-identity, not losing self-identity while playing roles.

Therefore, role-playing is not an issue. The whole life is role-playing and in every role the *bhakta* is always present. This is a *jijñāsu-bhakta*.

Madbhakto bhava, may you be my devotee. There are different kinds of devotees. If one is a devotee because one needs the help of Bhagavān, Bhagavān becomes an accomplice for various ends. There is nothing wrong with that, because we need grace, but we need to have knowledge of Īśvara, which is the gain of Īśvara. Therefore, *madbhakto bhava* means that one has to become a *jijñāsu*. How?

Madyājī bhava māṁ namaskuru. For a *jijñāsu*, any action enjoined by the Veda, a *vaidika-karma*, is also for gaining the knowledge of Īśvara. *Madyājī bhava*, means offer all your worship—whether *smārta-karmas* or *vaidika-karmas*, *stuthi*, *namaskāra*, etc.—unto me Any ray of glory anywhere is Īśvara's manifestation. Thus be, *matparāyaṇāḥ*, one for whom I am the ultimate end to be accomplished. We have to say 'ultimate' because there are other ends. Through all other ends, you achieve the *param*, ultimate, end. *Māmeva eṣyasi*, certainly you will reach me. The various things that we do in life become yoga when that is kept in view. We need not change anything external; attitude changes, vision changes.

Then, the culmination of the various devotees—*ārta arthārti jijñāsuḥ*—is a fourth devotee called a *jñāni*, a fulfilled devotee. All are devotees. Lord Krishna says, "All are exalted [because they recognize me; they have *śraddha* in *puṇya-pāpa*, *dharma*], but then, the *jñāni* is myself alone."¹⁷ That is Īśvara's vision.

¹⁷ *udhārāś sarva evaite jñānītvātmaiva me matam* BG 7.18